

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 102225
Inspection date 17 July 2007
Inspector Nicola Jayne Pascoe

Type of inspection Childcare
Type of care Childminding

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The childminder was registered in 1998. She lives with her husband and one adult and two school age children, on the edge of Falmouth in Cornwall. All areas of the property are used for childminding. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The childminder is registered to care for a maximum of six children at any one time and is currently minding eight children, part time and on different days of the week, seven of these children are under five years. One of the children is aged over eight. The childminder drives and walks to local schools and under fives group, to take and collect children. She attends local parent/toddler groups and childminding support groups. She also takes children to the toy library, park and local attractions. The family keep a pet house rabbit.

The childminder supports children with learning difficulties/disabilities. She is a member of the Cornwall Childminding Association and National Childminding Association. She is a member of an approved childminding network but no longer provides funded nursery education.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from the use of clean and hygienic premises, toys and equipment. The childminder is proactive in promoting very high standards of health and hygiene practice. As a result, children are developing a good awareness of the importance of following these good practices and of the positive impact this has on their physical development. Children have their own clean flannel and hand towel, which is used for one day before being washed and dried. Children wash their hands regularly and at appropriate times, for example following outdoor play and before snack time. They have their own toothbrush which is stored hygienically on a shelf in the ground floor bathroom. They are encouraged to clean their teeth after eating meals. Accident and medication records show that children receive appropriate levels of care if they are injured or sick. The childminder has completed recent paediatric first aid training and demonstrates a good ability to store and administer medication appropriately as required. Children's health records are shared effectively with parents and carers.

Children enjoy daily use of the newly landscaped garden area, which offers a hard surface for ball games, ride-on toys and role play. There is also a grassed area which is enhanced by the recent addition of an attractive 'sensory garden' for children to explore. There is a large outdoor store which contains a vast selection of additional age appropriate toys and resources. The childminder clearly values the importance of outdoor learning and play and recognises the benefit of fresh air and fun on children's health and well-being. Children may rest and relax in comfortable and safe areas indoors. The childminder recognises when children are tired and soothes and comforts them before settling them to have a nap. She monitors sleeping children well, as she uses close circuit television cameras (CCTV) and physically checks on them at least every 10 minutes. There is a suitable bedroom available on the first floor for children who may stay overnight. Children enjoy supervised access to a pet 'house' rabbit, who lives in a secure and clean hutch in a designated area. A written 'pet' policy is available to parents and details how children will be protected from any potential health risks. For example, children will wash their hands following handling the rabbit.

Children are keen to try a selection of different fresh fruits at snack time. They sit socially together indoors at a low, child sized table and chairs and are developing good table manners. They may also use the outdoor children's picnic table to sit in the fresh air to eat. Children receive a sufficient quantity of apple, banana, kiwi and blueberries, all are keen to taste and enjoy the different fruits. They are also offered mini cheese biscuits and when they have eaten a sufficient quantity the childminder rewards them with a 'teddy bear' wafer. Children bring a packed lunch from home, which the childminder stores appropriately. For example, some chilled items are stored in the fridge. She monitors and records the fridge temperature regularly to ensure that food is kept at the correct temperature at all times. Children are able to freely access fresh drinking water throughout the day as the childminder provides a filtered-water dispenser, which the children enjoy using to help themselves to drinks as and when they are thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a very safe, comfortable and suitable home environment. The childminder highly values her work with children and as a result, her home is stimulating, safe

and child-centred. The walls are decorated with children's creative displays and photographs. She uses age appropriate equipment to ensure that children's safety is maintained at all times. She has developed a very good range of written policies and procedures to follow, which will ensure that children are safe and secure indoors, outdoors and on outings. A comprehensive written risk assessment has been implemented and daily visual checks are carried out on the premises, toys and equipment. Children benefit from very high levels of supervision at all times. When children are sleeping in another room the childminder monitors them very effectively through 10 minute checks and by using CCTV. When children are playing indoors the exits are kept secure. The garden area is child orientated, safe and fully enclosed. Stair gates are used effectively, to prevent children from freely accessing areas which may be unsuitable for unsupervised use by younger children, for example the kitchen and the first floor.

The childminder provides a vast range of high quality toys and resources, which meet the safety standards. These are stored attractively in clearly labelled boxes. The childminder has developed methods with which to label these boxes which enables children to safely identify the contents and select specific favourite toys as they wish. There is a very good range of written safety policies in place, which are available to parents. These show that consideration has been given to maintaining children's safety in all situations. There are recent certificates available which show that appliances have been serviced annually. Children regularly follow the emergency evacuation procedure to develop their confidence and familiarity. They are transported safely in the childminder's vehicle, using appropriate seats and restraints, when enjoying regular trips and outings. Children are safeguarded by the childminder's comprehensive knowledge and awareness of area child protection procedures. The childminder demonstrates an excellent awareness and understanding of safety issues and protects children very well.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are actively engaged in very enjoyable, age appropriate and stimulating activities. They make excellent use of both the indoor and outdoor environment for learning. They have access to a vast range of high quality resources which promote their overall development. Children are eager to initiate play ideas with others. They greatly benefit from the support and interaction of the childminder who actively participates in their games, demonstrating a very good ability to appropriately challenge children and further develop their opportunities for learning. Children play actively outdoors, maintaining high levels of concentration on their chosen activity. They are able to bring items from home to share with their friends, these items are treated with consideration and are respected and valued. For example, one child was eager to show the inspector their miniature china tea set, which was stored in a tiny wicker picnic hamper. They were clearly very proud of this and the other children showed a keen interest and a healthy respect for it's fragile nature. Children enjoy role play outdoors and are keen to dress up and use the outdoor 'kitchen' area. They play harmoniously together establishing ground rules and identifying individual roles, they cooperate very well to share toys and tools, they effectively maintain and develop ideas for play for considerable periods of time.

Children play together indoors after snack time. They create a secret 'den' where they enjoy shining different coloured torches and lights to see the varying effects. The childminder joins in to discuss what they are doing, she shows delight and wonder at the visual effects they are making. As a result, children are confident to continue this play and discuss it at length with the childminder, who effectively encourages and extends children's language development. Children's active play is interspersed with opportunities for rest and relaxation. For example, children have a snack time during the morning. This is a social occasion where they chat with

each other and the childminder and develop good table manners. They follow active indoor play with story time, when children choose a favourite book and the childminder reads to them whilst they sit close to her or on her lap. Children enjoy making ginger bread men puppets to act out the story. They have use of a wonderful range of materials and resources to achieve their desired result. All their creations are admired by the childminder, who lavishes praise upon them. As a result, children demonstrate high levels of self-confidence and have pride in themselves.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are clearly very settled, happy and content. They are familiar with the home environment and have developed strong and trusting relationships with the childminder, her family and other children. They appear to work as a happy, family unit. The childminder recognises children's individual abilities and preferences and respects these in her planning and delivery of the daily routine. Children are able to select favourite toys and books, they make suggestions and offer ideas to the childminder, who values their input and acts upon their advice. Children enjoy very good opportunities through planned activities to explore their own and different cultures and beliefs. There is a suitable range of visual aids and resources which promote a positive awareness and understanding of peoples differing abilities. The childminder demonstrates a very good ability to provide high levels of care and support to children with learning difficulties/disabilities and their families. All children use sign language as an alternative form of communication and as a result, even very young children are able to communicate effectively with others.

Children are very well behaved, polite and kind to one another. They demonstrate a consideration for one another. For example, older children care for younger children and ensure that they are fully included in their play. Children say 'please' and 'thank you' at appropriate times, they take turns and share toys and resources extremely well. The childminder very effectively uses age appropriate and positive methods of behaviour management, which are consistent with her written policy. There are clear ground rules with which children are familiar. The childminder is an excellent role model and children are keen to follow her good examples. Children's work is displayed attractively around the home to be valued and admired by all. They have their own coat peg and self-register using a photograph of themselves, which they place beside a photograph of the childminder and her husband and family. As a result, children are developing a sense of self-worth and belonging. The childminder is very aware of the importance of sharing high levels of information with parents and carers and of the benefit of this good practice for the children attending. She provides parents with very good levels of written information each day in a personal daily diary, which she produces for each child attending. She displays useful levels of information around the home and engages parents in daily discussion. She welcomes parents phone calls, should they have a query or concern. She has produced a comprehensive range of written policies and procedures which are contained in a prospectus for parents. Children's records are kept confidential and are shared appropriately and regularly with parents and carers. Several parents, and two children, have written personal statements about the standards of childcare they have experienced from this childminder, for the inspector to read during the visit. It is clear that they are all extremely happy with the quality of care and support provided by this childminder. There is evidence that many children return to her home on an informal basis, to visit and enjoy her company, even though she is no longer required to provide childminding services. She clearly maintains long-standing positive and caring relationships with the children she cares for and their families.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from being cared for by a well-qualified, enthusiastic and committed childminder. They are effectively protected from un-vetted persons and are supervised very closely at all times. The childminder demonstrates a high level of commitment to attending further training and development. She keeps up-to-date through early years publications, membership of the local childminding network and by liaising with other registered childminders. She has developed very effective procedures for providing emergency cover if required. She organises her home well to provide safe and comfortable areas in which children may rest and play. She recognises the importance of identifying, respecting and meeting children's individual needs. The registration system clearly details the actual times of children's arrival and departure.

Documentation is well-organised, stored securely, updated regularly and shared appropriately with parents. The childminder is aware of the requirement to notify Ofsted of any significant changes or events. She intends to do this at the end of this year, when one child will attend school full-time. Childminding documentation is kept for an appropriate length of time. Children's records contain good levels of information and are used effectively to monitor and assess their progress. Confidentiality is respected and maintained. All the required documentation is made readily available for inspection. Overall, the childminder meets the needs of the range of the children for whom she provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was given a good judgement. The childminder agreed to update the child protection policy to include a statement of procedure to follow if an allegation of serious harm or abuse is made about a child while in your care. There is evidence to show that the childminder has now considered the procedure that she would follow in the event of an allegation being made against her and has identified a suitable course of action which notifies all relevant agencies, whilst effectively maintaining confidentiality.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk